

REMARKS

The Office Action dated February 3, 2004, has been carefully considered. In response thereto, the present application has been amended in a manner which is considered to place it into condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding Office Action and issuance of a Notice of Allowance are respectfully solicited.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the Submission of Formal Drawings filed concurrently herewith overcomes the objection to the drawings and that the present Amendment overcomes the objection to claim 11.

The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-11 and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over *Bjerre et al* (US 2002/0123911 A1) in view of officially noticed prior art.

The present application claims the benefit of three provisional patent applications. The earliest, Provisional Application No. 60/194,727, has a filing date of April 5, 2000. Therefore, any claim in the present application which is supported by the disclosure of the '727 provisional application is entitled to a filing date of April 5, 2000.

By contrast, *Bjerre et al* has an earliest effective filing date of October 10, 2000, which is after the filing date of the '727 provisional application. Thus, *Bjerre et al* is not prior art against any claim of the present application which is supported by the disclosure of the '727 provisional application. The Applicants have reviewed the disclosure of the '727 provisional application and respectfully submit that it supports the subject matter of present claims 1-11 and 16-19.

Thus, *Bjerre et al* is not prior art with respect to any of the claims rejected over that reference. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that any ground of rejection involving that reference is unfounded.

Finally, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 12-15 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over *Chou et al* in view of officially noticed prior art is rendered moot by the cancellation of those claims in the present Amendment.

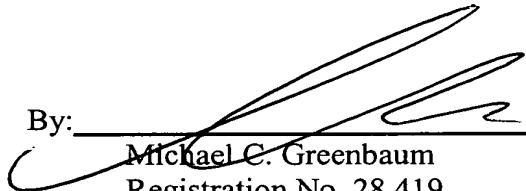
In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. Notice of such allowance is respectfully solicited.

In the event there are any questions relating to this Amendment or the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned concerning such questions so that prosecution of this application may be expedited.

Please charge any shortage of fees, or credit any overpayment thereof, to BLANK ROME LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (114944-00433). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this Amendment or is insufficient to render this Amendment timely, the Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____


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